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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION ON CAFTA, JUNE 17, 2005

1. Op-ed by Melvin Martinez in San Pedro Sula-based liberal daily "Tiempo" on 6/17, titled "The Necessary Latin Americanism." "The greatest Latin American thinkers and statesmen clearly understood that the integration of the Latin American countries was a fundamental precondition for the development of our countries and the improvement of the quality of life for the people who inhabit this region of the world. These countries had previously been subjected to a cruel domination under the European powers and currently under the United States Empire."

"Most integrationist projects today in the so called Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) and CAFTA are clearly geared towards the big interest groups of the U.S. and the political economy of that government. However, in reading the documents related to the 'Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas' (ALBA, Spanish acronym) we can see that the solidarity envisioned by the Latin American forefathers is becoming the basic principle that should guide our countries to an integration that is real and sincere and leads to the collective creation of liberty, justice, and development."

"But to understand the approach taken by the ALBA, it is necessary to let go of the egoism, the desire for riches, and the unhealthy concept of competition and winning as the essence of the economic system, which has been ingrained by capitalist theory."

"The ALBA can be the light that guides the struggle for a new independence and true integration of the Latin American and Caribbean people, retaking the ideas of our forefathers in the search for that Motherland for which Morazan, Bolivar and Marti fought and gave their lives."

Pierce